

crop. Current levels of ethanol production add 30 cents to the value of a bushel of corn and adds about \$4.5 billion to the U.S. farm economy annually. That will help us, Mr. Speaker, when we are looking at this budget. By creating an additional demand for corn, we can help ensure that the market price will provide a sufficient return on the cost of production to allow the farmer to break even, hopefully even turn a profit. That will lessen the need for Federal support subsidies that are currently needed to keep farmers on the farm. That is beneficial for the producer, it is beneficial for the rural economy, and it is beneficial to the environment.

I have pursued this cause of ethanol along with the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS). We introduced the Clean Air and Water Preservation Act of 2001. We have been joined by more than 30 Members of Congress who have cosponsored this legislation. Our legislation would phase out MTBE over 3 years. It calls on the EPA to assist in dealing with groundwater pollution already caused by MTBE. It keeps the oxygenate provisions of the Clean Air Act intact. And it promotes the use of ethanol.

At a time when energy is on the Nation's agenda, let us not ignore the role of ethanol, the clean-burning, home-grown natural fuel source, or the role that agriculture plays in our Nation's prosperity and security.

PRESIDENT BUSH'S ANTI-ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIOR

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise this afternoon to highlight some of the serious shortcomings in the Bush administration's environmental arena as it relates to national energy plans.

Last month, President Bush stood before Congress in these very Chambers and spoke to the American people, saying he would pursue alternative energy sources and environmentally sound policies to help solve our energy crisis. In fact, I want to quote the President because he told us, and I quote, "We can promote alternative energy sources and conservation, and we must." He was so right. At the time, I thought the plan sounded too good to be true. Unfortunately, with the recent release of the administration's budget blueprint, I realize that it was too good to be true.

Sadly, the Bush administration's budget blueprint reneges on the commitments the President made to pursue renewable energy sources. Headlines in the Washington Post and other newspapers across the country have stated the administration's intent to cut energy efficiency and renewable energy R&D and technology development programs by 35 percent. That is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker.

This is especially frustrating because in this Congress we have an impressive group of bipartisan support for renewables. As the lead Democrat on the Subcommittee on Energy of the Committee on Science, I am personally working with the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BARTLETT), the chairman, to promote environmentally sound priorities.

Mr. Speaker, if the 35 percent cut in the blueprint were to go through, it would seriously hamper efforts to develop improved and lower cost solar energy; it would hamper wind power investment, bioenergy and geothermal energy technologies.

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This is where our Federal priorities must be, not in increasing our dependence on fossil fuels, as the administration appears to want in its policies.

It is said that actions speak louder than words, Mr. Speaker. That is why I am outraged. But I am not surprised. I am not surprised that the administration's commitment to environmentally friendly sources of energy lasted only as long as the television cameras were rolling.

I say to our President, now is not the time to cut funding for national energy efficiency and renewable energy programs. Now is the time to increase the investment. Proposing to cut funding for vital energy efficiency and renewable energy programs would be a step in the very wrong direction, and it would be a serious blow to the efforts that we hope to take to craft a sensible national energy policy.

In my district, as well as across California, consumers and businesses are facing electric and gas bills two or three times higher than those of last year. California is facing an electricity reliability crisis that threatens our State's economy. What we need is responsible energy policy that includes significant investment in clean energy sources to supplement electric supply, and we also must recognize the need to reduce demand for electricity by promoting and using more efficient energy technologies. These are programs that will protect our environment and leave a better future for our children.

Since passing the National Energy Policy Act in 1992, Congress has generally ignored energy issues; but the power problems in California, as well as the increased price of natural gas and oil throughout our entire Nation, have brought energy back to the top of our Nation's agenda. The energy shortage we are experiencing in California is proof enough that Congress must raise the stakes in search of alternative energy sources. Obviously, what we are doing now is not good enough.

As Congress and this administration forges a long-term energy plan, it is imperative that we make a true commitment to alternative energy sources, efficiency, and conservation to prevent future energy crises and to protect our environment. Measures of this kind can

work. For example, in my district two of my counties are working to make sure we have more energy-efficient programs, programs that must be modeled for the rest of the country.

ADDRESSING IMPORTANT ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I woke up this morning and I read on the front page of USA Today that President Bush is doing a terrible job on highly significant environmental issues. I suppose that is no surprise to my colleagues here in the well or here in the House Chambers.

Yesterday the Bush Administration abandoned more stringent restrictions on the amount of arsenic allowed in tap water. Arsenic is a known carcinogen, I think many people know. The week before, President Bush broke a campaign promise to the American people that he would work to reduce carbon dioxide emissions; and carbon dioxide is, of course, a greenhouse gas that causes and is a major factor in global warming.

I also read in the paper this morning that the Bush administration is planning to restrict new mining limits in the next few days. Of course, we have not heard about that yet, but it sounds like just another indication that this administration is essentially anti-environment.

Mr. Speaker, I ask, what is the President going to do for the special interests tomorrow? I do not think there is any person, average person, or any group of concerned citizens, that asked the President to abandon these more stringent restrictions on the amount of arsenic in water. I doubt very much that there was a group of citizens who told him he should go back on his campaign promise and not regulate carbon dioxide emissions.

This is coming from the special interests. This is coming from the corporate special interests, oil interests, mining interests, coal interests, who contributed to the President's campaign and who now are calling the shots with this administration at the White House on these very important environmental issues.

The reason that I am so concerned about it, Mr. Speaker, is because we are talking about the health and the safety of the average American, the air we breathe, the water that we drink. These are not environmental issues that we have any doubt about what the impact is going to be. We know that if these carbon dioxide emissions are not regulated in some way, that a lot more people will get sick from the air. We know that if the arsenic levels are not reduced in drinking water, that a lot more people will get cancer from arsenic.

So it is really almost mind-boggling to think that this administration, in such a short time, has come down so hard, if you would, on the side of those who would seek to deregulate or weaken, or certainly not improve, environmental regulations that need to be improved.

Let me talk initially, if I could, about the carbon dioxide change that the President had. He did not change his position on carbon dioxide until four Republican Senators sent a letter to him on March 6. Until that time, not only during the campaign, but even in the first few months we heard from the EPA administrator, Christine Whitman, the former Governor of New Jersey, my former governor, that a consensus had been essentially built in the White House, in this administration, to regulate CO₂. But after that letter was sent on March 6, the President broke his promise, because special-interest lobbyists pressured him to do so. We know that Vice President CHENEY basically pulled the rug from under the EPA administrator and insisted in his capacity as the chairman, I guess, of this new Energy Task Force that carbon dioxide not be regulated.

But, again, I think this is symptomatic of what we are going to see with this administration, broken promises on protections that we need for the environment and for the American people. I hope it does not continue, but every indication is that it will.

Let me briefly mention, Mr. Speaker, about the carbon dioxide emissions, because I want everyone to understand that the reduction in carbon dioxide that myself and other environmentalists support is not a crazy idea that is just supported by a bunch of eco-freaks. In fact, numerous large multinational corporations have adopted company-wide targets to cut global warming pollutants that include carbon dioxide.

One of President Bush's most loyal supporters, the Enron Corporation, has urged the President to create a credit-trading system for carbon dioxide in a manner very similar to a bill I introduced in Congress and that I will be reintroducing shortly, where we use a trading system, which is essentially a market approach to try to reduce carbon dioxide and other emissions.

I have worked, frankly, with both utilities and environmental groups in creating what I consider a workable emission-reduction plan, and I know that there are solutions other than "business as usual," in other words, the idea of simply throwing the environment aside in the name of economic development.

Utilities and environmentalists can work together to come up with a program that reduces carbon dioxide. It is not a situation where you have to choose between the environment and industry, or you have to choose between impacting people's health in terms of the air they breathe versus the cost of producing energy.

Now, in making the statement that was made yesterday on the second issue, to roll back protective standards on the amount of acceptable arsenic in drinking water, I think the Bush administration crossed the line even further in terms of not caring about the public than they did even with the carbon dioxide emissions, because here we are talking directly about an issue that studies have shown will directly impact the number of people that have cancer.

Arsenic, I do not have to tell anyone, is an awful substance that can cause bladder, lung, skin and other kinds of cancer. The proposal to reduce the amount of arsenic from an acceptable level of 50 parts per billion, which is the status quo, to 10 parts per billion, is actually something that was endorsed by the European Union and is in place for the countries that are part of the European Union, and also adopted by the World Health Organization. So the United States now, instead of being in unison with Europe and most of the world, is now keeping with a standard that was adopted in the forties about the level of arsenic that you can consume in your water.

According to the National Academy of Sciences, exposure to arsenic at the current standard, 50 parts per billion "could easily result in a combined cancer risk on the order of 1 in 100." This level of risk is much higher than the maximum cancer risk typically allowed by the Safe Drinking Water Act standards. Most of the time when we are talking about what is acceptable, we are talking about a case where maybe 1 in 10,000 people would be impacted. When you talk about 1 in 100, that is an incredible risk and could impact millions of people, maybe tens of millions of people.

The interesting thing about the administration's announcement yesterday also with regard to the arsenic levels is that once again my former governor, now the EPA administrator, Christine Whitman, actually admitted that the 50 parts per billion was unacceptable and that the standard needed to be lowered significantly. She said it twice in the statement that she put out from the EPA. Yet at the same time, she said that the 10 parts per billion was not a standard that there was a lot of scientific agreement on.

I would say once again that I know that Mrs. Whitman is trying to be helpful and trying to suggest that the standard needs to be lowered even though the Bush Administration does not want to do it, but I would point out again that we know that a lot of the countries in the world, part of the European Union and the World Health Organization, have adopted the 10 parts per billion, so you cannot say it is not a standard widely accepted. In fact, it is widely accepted.

Finally, I wanted to mention, before I move on to some of my colleagues that are going to join me today, this latest report that the Bush administra-

tion is proposing to suspend new environmental regulations on hard-rock mining that were put in place over industry objections on President Clinton's last day in office.

The Interior Department's Bureau of Land Management is to announce supposedly today that it is reopening the revised 38-09 regulations, giving the government new authority to prohibit new mine sites on Federal land. Again, we cannot allow the administration to move forward with this attack on our health and the health of the environment. We are talking about water and air quality, the key components of life. We do not want our constituents, Americans, living in fear; and I think that we are just seeing more and more of these ill-advised choices by the Bush administration.

I know that some of my colleagues today are probably going to talk about the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as well. I would yield to the gentleman from Oregon, if he likes, at this point.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I appreciate the gentleman's courtesy and this opportunity to join in this discussion.

It is important to me. I commend the gentleman for focusing attention on the environment and how the pieces fit together, and the relationship between Congress, the new administration and the American people.

It is very much in keeping with why I came to Congress, determined to make sure that the Federal Government was a better partner in promoting community livability, making our families safe, healthy and economically secure. An important part of that partnership, frankly, is that the Federal Government needs to play a constructive role. It needs to lead by example, set the tone, and follow through.

I, frankly, was shocked in the area of environmental stewardship with last week's announcement dealing with global warming and the broken promise of the Bush administration dealing with how we were going to deal with CO₂ emissions. I just returned from 4 days in my State of Oregon; and, like your State of New Jersey, citizens there are keenly concerned about the environment and quality of life. I was, frankly, despite that environmental orientation of Oregonians, surprised at the intensity of the public reaction to the administration's lack of commitment to the environment.

Now, setting apart the fuzzy image portrayed by the last campaign, it is clear at this point it is more characterized by a series of reversals. You have already referenced the reversal of the arsenic standard by EPA administrator Whitman. Earlier in the week we heard from Department of Energy Secretary Abraham that our energy crisis could be avoided by relaxing environmental regulations and drilling for oil in Alaska's National Wildlife Refuge. Of

course, last week, President Bush reversed an explicit campaign position to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

□ 1330

None of these actions demonstrates that commitment to the livability of our communities, ensuring the public safety, environmental protection, or long-term energy conservation. We certainly do not need to spend more time studying whether or not global warming is happening, or whether arsenic poses a health problem to our children and families. We know that it is. We need to devote our time and energy instead to deal with how we are going to fix it.

It is true that we do not harbor a false sense of security in numbers. The fact is that almost 2,000 scientists have reiterated their findings that global warming is occurring, and its linkage to carbon-based energy consumption is clear. This is a clear emerging scientific consensus.

The administration's actions are also out of sync with where the American public is concerned. The gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and I take pride in the environmental consciousness of the citizens that we represent in New Jersey and Oregon, but it is clear that the American public feel deeply about the environment and environmental protection. It was just this week that a Gallop poll found that 52 percent of Americans believe that we should be protecting the environment over a much smaller number dealing with energy, and by almost 2 to 1 there was a majority of those polled who opposed drilling for oil in the Alaskan Wildlife Refuge.

On the campaign trail, then-Governor Bush promised to seek a reduction of carbon dioxide emissions, including those emissions on a long list of pollutants regulated at power plants. Last fall, the Bush campaign materials released a comprehensive national energy policy that spoke of the "need for a comprehensive energy policy," I am quoting, "that would be forward-looking, encourage the development of renewable energy sources and increased conservation."

Specifically, then-Governor Bush proposed that legislation be introduced that would require electric utilities to reduce emissions and significantly improve air quality and "establish mandatory reduction targets for emissions of 4 main pollutants, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, mercury and carbon dioxide." He was going to phase them in, and so on and so forth, provide market-based incentives; the gentleman from New Jersey has heard the drill.

The point is that he was clear and unequivocal. In fact, then-candidate Bush derided Vice President Gore for being too soft on this. This came up in one of the Presidential debates, and we know those are perhaps the most intensely scripted political theaters in the history of the Republic. This was not accidental, this was calculated.

Now, the question arises, and I have had difficulty from the press because they want to know, was this an action of deliberately misleading the public on the part of candidate Bush, or did he just not understand. I do not want to be in a situation to try and delve into the hearts and minds of other politicians, but suffice it to say, I think it is kind of an unnerving Hobson's choice here. Do we believe that a governor of an energy-producing State whose primary professional background to that point had been as an energy executive, did not know what he was talking about, or the alternative, which was he knew, in fact, what he was talking about, and there was never any intention to provide this protection to the American public.

I think, frankly, either approach is unacceptable. It is unnerving, it underscores the credibility of what we are doing in the political process, and I personally am very much dismayed, not just because of what it says about the political process, but what it means for us as a public to try and deal with problems of global warming, of acid rain, of trying to get on to the next generation of energy-efficient activities and do what this Congress needs to be doing.

I am more than willing, Mr. Speaker, to continue. I have some further thoughts, but I notice that we have been joined by another colleague, and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) perhaps at this point, before going on and talking about the Arctic Wildlife Refuge in a few minutes, maybe the gentleman has other parts of this discussion that he would like to enter into at this point.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's comments. What I wanted to do was just comment briefly on the arsenic and then yield to our colleague from Maine.

The one thing that I noticed that my colleague from Oregon talked about, the special interests with regard to this arsenic level in drinking water; it is interesting, because yesterday, when the EPA administrator former Governor Whitman announced that they were, in fact, going to stick with the status quo and not lower the arsenic level standards, contrary to what had been proposed, it was the same day that there was an article in The Washington Post which was called, "All Decked Out, But Will Runoff Ruin the Well." It was by the American Wood Preservers Institute which was worried that this new arsenic standard would have a negative effect on their ability to produce this pressure-treated wood product.

Basically, what they do is they produce the kind of wood product that, I guess, is coated with a material that preserves it, what we see on decks or boardwalks or docks around the country. It said in the article that the stakes are high. Obviously, this organization was trying to get the standard to stay the same. It says, "The stakes

are high for the wood preservers because 98 percent of the lumber sold for outdoor purposes, mostly northern pine, is treated with CCA at some 350 plants. The plants use about 144.5 million pounds CCA annually and about 37 million pounds of that mixture is arsenic. They sell 5 billion board feet annually.

I was thinking to myself, because of what the gentleman said, about our own constituents. I live in a shore district, so it is true that a lot of the places we go on the boardwalk or on the docks we see, I assume, this kind of coated wood. Can we imagine for 1 minute that anybody who had a dock or was using a boardwalk would not sacrifice that if they knew that the alternative was that their drinking water was going to be contaminated and they had a 1 out of 100 chance of getting cancer from the arsenic. Our priorities, or the administration's priorities, are unbelievable that this kind of an organization would come in and say, we have to continue to manufacture this processed wood and we are going to not be able to sell as much, or it is going to cost us more. That is what we are dealing with here, that kind of industry. The average person is going to say, charge me more for the deck, but at least keep the water so that I can drink it. It is just incredible to me.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maine.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me. I appreciate the gentleman holding this Special Order to discuss one of the more disturbing incidents of the early weeks of the Bush administration. The President has broken his promise to the American people on the environment and, in doing so, he has evidenced a real disregard for our health and for the long term consequences of the policies that we adopt here in the Congress today.

I really think we need to look at this example. I have had legislation in each of the last two Congresses and will introduce legislation very soon to deal with these old coal-fired and oil-fired power plants that are the major source of man-made carbon dioxide emissions in this country. I think it is worth noting that these old power plants which were grandfathered under the Clean Air Act and the Clean Air Act amendments are not subject to the same standards that a new power plant would be in this country. Yet, they emit 33 to 40 percent of all man-made carbon dioxide emissions in this country.

The President tried to say that well, carbon dioxide is not a pollutant, and certainly it is not a pollutant like mercury or sulfur dioxide or nitrogen dioxide because those are pollutants in all cases and in all circumstances. But carbon dioxide, because there is so much of it being emitted now, is transforming the globe in a way that we can no longer ignore.

During his campaign and even until last week, President Bush had committed to reducing carbon dioxide emissions from power plants. For example, in a speech last September in Michigan, President Bush said, we will require all power plants to meet clean air standards in order to reduce emissions of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, mercury, and carbon dioxide. That is the four-pollutant strategy that the EPA administrator, Christy Whitman, was discussing in the early weeks of her new job. Mr. Bush made this promise to protect people from the effects of climate change and when it was made, it was a serious and substantial part of the appeal that he was making to the American people to suggest that he was a moderate on the issues related to the environment. But that is not the case. He has broken his word to protect the American people and has instead given in to the oil and gas industries who, not surprisingly, are among the largest contributors to his campaign.

Now, Christy Whitman, the new administrator of the EPA, was traveling through Europe and saying in radio and television interviews that the President would work to protect people by cleaning up power plants and further, that he was really concerned about this issue of global climate change.

Now, over the last few years, we have had this debate, both in this Congress and around the country, as to whether this climate change phenomenon is real, is it serious, and is it immediate. Well, every time the group of scientists working through the United Nations take another look at this, the evidence is clearer and clearer than it was before. Now, there is a consensus. There is a consensus in the scientific community that climate change is real, that the problem is serious, that it is driven by man-made emissions from automobiles and power plants and other sources, and that we need to do something about it.

The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the IPCC, is a group of scientists from around the world. They have agreed that climate change is a real issue and we need to act in response. This is not a small group. More than 2,500 of the world's leading climate scientists, economists and risk analysis experts from 80 different countries have contributed to the panel's third assessment report on climate change. These scientists are projecting that we will see temperatures rise from 2.7 to 11 degrees over the next 100 years. Particularly at the upper end of that scale, that could have a phenomenal impact on this country and on the globe. There would be a broad range of different impacts. Sea levels will rise, and on the coast of Maine, we care about that; we do not want to see our beaches disappear. But particularly in tropical areas of the world and in places like Bangladesh which are low-lying countries, the effects on the globe and the

resulting movement of populations could be substantial.

Glaciers and polar ice packs are melting. Already the area covered by sea ice in the Arctic declined by about 6 percent from 1978 to 1995. Ice thickness has decreased 40 percent since the 1960s. Droughts and wildfires will occur more often, and as habitat changes or is destroyed, species will be pushed to extinction.

Despite the scientific consensus, what the President said in his announcement was that there is uncertainty. Well, there is not. One can always find someone who disagrees with an emerging consensus, but this is a very strong emerging consensus in the scientific community.

The oil and gas industries, as important as they are in this country, as much as they may have contributed to various people, are a source of the problem that we need to get a grip on.

I also wanted to mention, just in terms of the warming issue, the year 1998 was the warmest year ever measured globally in history. The top 10 warmest years ever measured worldwide over the last 120 years all occurred after 1981, and the sixth warmest of these years occurred after 1990.

As I mentioned before, I have this legislation, the Clean Power Plant Act, which I will introduce again, and the interesting thing about this legislation is we are not talking about Kyoto here. What I am suggesting in this bill is that carbon dioxide emissions in this country be set at the level authorized by the Rio Treaty in 1991, when the former President Bush was President, a treaty that he signed, a treaty that was ratified by the U.S. Senate. And the way my legislation works, it allows emissions trading in carbon dioxide among different plants, but overall, it sets a national limit consistent with the Rio Treaty, and then we work to set caps for individual plants and to make sure that we get down to the overall national goal.

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As I said, it is possible to do emissions trading because carbon dioxide does not have an adverse local impact. It has an adverse global impact.

The last thing I want to say on this point, right now the President's failure to act is extremely disturbing, because any action that we take today is not likely to have a significant effect on the upper atmosphere for 100 years, for 100 years, and that means that we have to act before we have anyway of knowing exactly what the impact of our actions will be.

We just know that we have to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in this country. Carbon dioxide is the principal greenhouse gas; 33-40 percent of it comes from these old coal-fired and oil-fired power plants. And we can do it. It is possible to develop the technology.

Environmental cleanup will never get easier than when you have 33-40 percent of all of the emissions in the coun-

try coming from about 500 plants. It cannot be easier than this.

The President also said that he thought the costs of dealing with the climate change issues would be too much. He never said beside the costs of cleaning up 500 power plants, the costs of the weather patterns, the changes in weather patterns that we are going to face as the globe becomes warmer. He never factored in the costs that it is going to have on our agriculture areas as they find they are unable to grow in one part of the country and have to move to another part of the country. The costs of not acting are far greater than the costs of acting, and putting off for 4 years any effort to deal with the primary greenhouse gas is a fundamental mistake for the health of the planet.

It is a fundamental mistake in terms of our relations with the rest of the world, because other countries around the world are proceeding. We are the problem in this case. We are the problem.

Here we sit in the United States, 5 percent of the globe's population and we have met 25 percent of all the greenhouse gases in the country, and we are trying to suggest that China and India and other people need to act before we do.

It is time to put our own house in order. It is time for people in the Congress to get the President to reverse his position and to tell the oil and gas industries that this country, this planet cannot be held captive to their special interests for the next 4 years.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Maine (Mr. ALLEN), my colleague, and I know that everything the gentleman is saying is so true.

Just to give two examples, quickly, one is, I was with President Clinton last year at this time in March in India. And we had a ceremony, it was just outside the Taj Mahal, where we announced cooperation between India and the United States on a number of environmental issues that specifically related to clean air.

There is no question that India, being the sort of leader within the developing countries, is looking to see what the United States is going to do on CO₂ and other emissions before they are going to act. Because they say, look, most of the problem is coming from the developed country. If you are not going to take the initiative, then why should we when we are economically underdeveloped?

India was more than willing to play that role, but they are not going to do it if the United States does not take the leadership on it, that is for sure.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maine.

Mr. ALLEN. The gentleman makes a very good point. It reminds me of another thought here. Part of the concern is that India and China, as they develop their own energy resources, are

going to be relying on coal, among other sources, because both of those countries have coal.

We are developing in this country clean coal technology, clean coal technology that if this is transferred to China and India, if we help them with the development of their electrical infrastructure will have far less impact on the environment than otherwise.

It is not just carbon dioxide. It is also mercury. I mean, mercury is one of those pollutants that does not go away; and we are having substantial problems in the Northeast, as the gentleman knows, with mercury pollution.

Frankly, we have to figure out how to take some of this mercury out of the air, and the best way to do it is changing how we deal with these old coal-fired and oil-fired power plants.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman again for yielding.

Mr. PALLONE. The other thing the gentleman mentioned about coastal States. My district is a coastal district. In fact, there are certain parts of it that are no more than a few blocks wide from the ocean.

I will tell the gentleman that my constituents are very concerned about the impact that global climate changes are going to have on the rising sea level.

We have to put in place these beach replenishment projects every year that costs us millions of dollars, and that is not going to work any more if the sea level continues to rise. This is not pie in the sky. This is real.

ADDRESSING IMPORTANT ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for the balance of the time allocated to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues, and I think we have some interesting context that has been established here.

I would just take a moment to reference what my other colleague from Portland, the gentleman from Maine (Mr. ALLEN), talked about, that it is going to be 100 years or more before the full impact of actions that we take today will be felt, that we have set in motion a pattern of environmental destruction that will take decades and perhaps centuries to correct.

There is no time to waste, and it is not appropriate for us to continue pretending to do something about it by just reiterating the studies that have already been done. Most Americans agree with the scientific evidence that global warming is real and that we must, in fact, do something about it.

It is in this context that I must confess a certain surprise by the administration's proposal to meet the current energy crisis with a proposal to drill for oil in the Arctic Wildlife Refuge.

This issue beyond question, let us just put for a moment aside the notion that whether or not it is going to be destructive for the environment, whether the environmental costs, whether the problems that would deal with the native indigenous culture, treaty problems and environmental problems with our friends in Canada, put all of those aside for a moment, assume that it is either they could be moderated or it would be worth it.

There is a fundamental question whether or not it is actually worth it to go ahead and pursue this approach for the energy security of the United States.

I was pleased recently to read the latest newsletters from the Rocky Mountain Institute where Amory and Hunter Levins asked that fundamental question, can you, in fact, make a profit over the course of the next 20 years by invading the Arctic Wildlife Refuge?

It is interesting that the State of Alaska itself has done its recent price forecasting that suggests that what the State of Alaska envisions as being the long-term price of oil over the course of the next 10 years, that it would not generate enough revenue to be profitable.

If we use our time and our resources to recover this expensive oil in some of the most environmentally sensitive areas in the world, it would actually end up resulting in a waste of money, and we would have to be importing more oil sooner, as opposed to dealing with less expensive energy alternatives.

Many would argue that another fundamental issue, and it is one that I agree, is whether this country can continue to use the current energy patterns that we have using six times as much energy per capita as the rest of the world, twice as much as developed countries like Japan and Germany.

The irony is that conservation and energy efficiency does in fact work. It works better than an effort to exploit the Arctic Wildlife Refuge. It is estimated that a mere 3 miles per gallon improvement in the performance of SUVs would offset the oil production from the Arctic.

If, for some reason, we cannot change those huge and inefficient vehicles, just one half mile per gallon efficiency overall for the fleet would more than equal the production of the arctic wilderness.

This is not beyond our power. Last year, the average fleet efficiency of 24 miles per gallon was tied for a 20-year low. We can and we should do better.

In the Pacific Northwest, we are sending energy that we really do not have to spare to the State of California. Yet we find that there could be a 30 percent energy savings for reducing air conditioning just by changing the color of the roofs in southern California to a white reflective surface.

It would be far more effective for us to make that investment in conservation. When I started in this business 25

years ago, we were in the midst of an energy crisis. Even though many of those initiatives were reversed by the Reagan administration, conservation has nonetheless saved a quantity of energy that is four times the entire domestic oil industries production.

In the West, this is our only immediate solution. Given droughts and limited generating capacity, the only way this year that we will be able to make a difference is by changing our patterns of consumption. When we conserve, there is no threat from terrorists. There is no risk of environmental damage. It keeps producing year after year.

I must point out, perhaps most significantly when I hear on the floor of this Chamber people talking about protecting our strategic oil reserves, that if we place all of our bets on the Arctic Wildlife Refuge, we are, in fact, dooming the United States to a very insecure posture. If we are going to place our bets on an aging 800-mile long facility, a pipeline through the Arctic that is increasingly unreliable, that is wearing out, that is impossible to defend from disruption, from terrorists or rogue states or deranged people, it is not a very smart way for us to make those investments. Far better to deal with how we use energy in a more cost effective and efficient manner.

I have more comments to make on this, but I want to yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER).

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for yielding to me and for taking this special order; and I also want to thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE).

Clearly, the President has disappointed the Nation when he did an about-face and broke his promise to regulate CO₂ emissions, especially among the older power plants, oil and gas burning power plants in this Nation.

The suggestion has been made by some that it was okay to break this campaign promise because it was only one sentence in a long speech, it came late in the speech. I do not remember when any of us were running that our supporters told us it would be okay to break our promises if it was not the first thing we said in the speech or if it was not the fifth thing we said in the speech, that they would not take it that seriously.

As my colleagues have pointed out here, the President made this statement about these controls in CO₂ because he wanted to appear to the country to be concerned about the Nation's environment, and he wanted to appear to be more concerned than the Vice President Al Gore. That is why he made this promise. But the public thought he meant it. Now he has broken it.

Tragically, he has broken it because he is buying in to a very old idea that